

36 THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES

have even invaded the professions. They practice pharmacy in large numbers, medicine and dentistry in respectable numbers, and law in a few cases.

In recent times the activities of the women of the Philippines have assumed many aspects, and in their social work, in their clubs, and in their federations, Filipino women have played leading roles in the Philippine community. Yet their position in relation to suffrage is most anomalous. First granted the right to vote and hold public office by the legislative body amidst much rejoicing, the Constitutional Convention in response to hackneyed excuses practically canceled this right, without, however, being able to deprive women of the privilege of voting for or against the Constitution.

Just as Juan de la Cruz has typified the common Filipino man, so has Maria Clara, the heroine of Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere*, been taken as personifying the best in Filipino womanhood. Maria Clara is pictured in tasteful native costume and with a singularly modest demeanor. Today, however, Maria Clara would have to undergo some changes. She is no longer the appealingly, timid, young thing who answered in monosyllables when addressed. The modern Filipina, though still lovely and outwardly demure, is more outspoken and is the mainstay of her family. She is mistress of her home and safekeeper of her husband's income. She likes to take part in social entertainment. With keen enjoyment, the Filipino girls participate in modern dances and make graceful and obliging partners.

The fair Filipina of today dresses smartly, whether in dainty native costume or the latest Paris mode.

She is fond of jewelry, and no costume is complete without the family diamonds. At the same time, she handles the family purse, which is wise, for the men of the family are apt to dissipate their savings in gambling, and in the pursuit of enticing dancing girls or even in the maintenance of clandestine establishments. Her fingers are nimble and at embroidery and hat-